DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 441 457 IR 057 728

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TITLE	Matching Preservation Decisions with Collection Development Policy.
PUB DATE	1999-08-00
NOTE	6p.; In: IFLA Council and General Conference. Conference Programme and Proceedings (65th, Bangkok, Thailand, August 20-28, 1999); see IR 057 674.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla65/papers/043-102e.htm.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Foreign Countries; Library Administration; *Library Collection Development; *Library Policy; Mission Statements; National Libraries; *Preservation; Regional Libraries
IDENTIFIERS	Baltic States; Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Mongolia; Romania; Russia; Slovenia

ABSTRACT

Based on communication with librarians from Russia, Mongolia, the Baltic States, Bulgaria, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, and Romania, this paper discusses library collection development and preservation policies. Highlights include: mission statements of national and regional libraries; availability of a formal structure responsible for collection management that binds the relationship between collection development and preservation in the institution; and adherence to large-scale preservation programs versus title-for-title preservation, including strategies for storage and handling (e.g., new facilities, boxing, binding, microfilming, and deacidification). (MES)

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ED 441 457

IFLANET
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
Search Contacts
Annual Conference

65th IFLA Council and General Conference

Bangkok, Thailand, August 20 - August 28, 1999

Conference Proceedings

Code Number: 043-102-E
Division Number: VI
Professional Group: Preservation and Conservation
Joint Meeting with: -
Meeting Number: 102
Simultaneous Interpretation: *No*

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Matching preservation decisions with collection development policy

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Paper

There is overwhelming evidence of a basic transformation in collection management resulting from and accompany the paradigm shift to a global digitized information library service. Constrained budgets coupled with rising prices, expanding networks and sophisticated technology, along with an explosion of electronic publishing and copyright, have placed limitations on library services. This makes for a challenging transition and in many cases provocative ones. The effects of these difficult external forces on collection management are multiple and profound. Nonetheless, the principles of collection development and collection preservation which constitute collection management seem to remain basically the same, namely:

- acquisition of materials and making accessible resources that are of relevance to current information needs of a library clientele;
- inclusion into collection and preservation projects of documents that will serve future generations;
- creation of new cooperative schemes avoiding duplication and title-for-title preservation selection approach;

Collection management which controls the processes for identification, selection, acquisition, organisation, evaluation, maintaining and making resources available, has been playing one of the most decisive roles in satisfying users' needs which is a library's ultimate goal and objective, and the essence of action plans.

IRO 57728

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Collection development and preservation policies that stem from an overall institutional mission have been, if not always at least over the last 2 decades, designed in such a way as to avoid unnecessary duplication among institutions.

Another common attribute of these interelated notions is transparency of allocated budgets or accountability to external agencies to prove expediency of expenditures, since unprecedented explosion of a number of appearing publications and a threatening scale and speed of deterioration of documents mandates only reasonable and justified expenditures. Staff cuttings affecting both collection development and preservation stimulates application of appropriate approaches based on increased productivity.

All of these are characteristics of any coherent collection development and preservation policies and are forcing the need for applying large scale preservation strategies.

I beleive we all agree that dichotomy "warehouse-gateway" manifests itself in a most varied way throughout the world. This paradigm shift affects all libraries and their policies, collection development and preservation inclusive, but local variations are very tangible due to the specific conditions found in each country or group of countries. In this respect Eastern Europe and CIS is a very diverse area. The closer the country to West the more similarities with neighbouring Germany, France, Scandinavian countries you may find. Moving to East shows less similarities, but more problems inherited from the past and deepened by the present.

What is common to understanding the inner links between collection development and preservation policies is the usage of a more or less the similar terminology defining collection management. This helps to draw lines of comparison between different practices.

My report is based on communication with librarians from Russia some other CIS countries Mongola, Baltic states, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Romania. It is quite a large sampling, justifying broader extrapolation of findings.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to colleagues from all these countries who helped me gather missing data for this report. I suspect it is very superficial, since collected data originated mainly from national libraries. Still I hope it will give you a little insight into what is happening in Eastern Europe and CIS countries in regard of large scale preservation programs.

The starting point for an overview will be availability or absence of mission statements and of collection management policies.

All national libraries, with a few exceptions have articulated their mission statements and derived from them policies for collection development. In quite a number of cases preservation policies were also generated in compliance with the stated missions.

For example in Latvia priorities in collection preservation are as follows:

- archival collection of Latvian piblications
- Letonica
- rare books and maniscripts.

In principle, all National libraries in a region, as national repositories are doing the same with respect to the national repertoire, exteriorica and special collections.

Regional libraries at least in Russia are in the process of redefining their mission statements and reconsidering collection management approaches. Their preservation efforts are focused mainly on regional publications and special collections with a few deviations stemming from economic or cultural differences like, say, in Karelia which industrial profile- timber - necessiates collecting and preservation of related material regardless of the place of

publication. Written collection development statements are widely spread practice, whereas fixed preservation policies are still a rare case on a regional level and, in general, in public, special and university libraries. Again this conclusion is based on my Russian and CIS experience.

A second important point is availability of a formal structure responsible for collection management that binds the relationship in the institution. Again geographical diversity leads to diversity in the forms of delegating responsibility for collections management.

Less money intensifies competition for sharing allocated resources between different departments. Hence, there is growing understanding that a library has to delegate functions of collection management to a certain structure or a particular person which will handle both collection development and preservation.. This new agenda is being supported for example, in the National Library of Chech Republic which set up collection and preservation division, by the National and University Library of Slovenia (with its Preservation Department). In Russia, there are also marks of treating current selection and acquisition and collection preservation as inseparably linked functions. Therefore it is normarly a deputy director who is in charge of making institutional decisions related to collection management. Regrettably, in major Russian federal and regional libraries subject bibliographers, conservators, staff responsible for digitization, microfilming or maintaining collections in reality do not communicate as they should because of structural barriers.

The conservation department is traditionally under a deputy responsible for research activity whereas collection development is supervised by the deputy in charge of selection, acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, and as we say "other library activities". The impact of this tradition on collection preservation is not the best one. Very often reporting to different heads hinders communication, badly affects decision making and consequently leads to misuse of avalaible funds and to losses in preservation. Appropriate and unbiased inter-institutional decisions are often made at different sorts of library councils representing different specialists from different departments. This practice may be found in Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Bulgaria.

Third important line of comparison is adherance to large scale preservation programmes versus title-for-title preservation. Proper accomodation of collections in stable environment and their careful handling was named as most significant mass preservation strategy.

Items added to collections have been chosen as a result of a long process of identification and selection . Therefore by definition they deserve to be preserved. Hence adequate storage and handling for all previously selected materials is considered prior to other mass treatments. This strategy is especially strong in less economically stable countries, where there are fewer opportunities to apply other large scale preservation options. This does not mean, however, that all libraries have achieved ideal storage conditions or solved all handling problems. Not at all. But these strategies are pointed out by all libraries as fundamental institutional goals.

For example, National Library of Latvia is building a new repository to provide better storage that will prolong the lifespan of collections; the National Library of Slovenia is planning to complete a new building for housing collections in 2001. In 1997 the same library built a special safety 80 square meters vault to accomodate most valuable artifacts. Provisions are made to safeguard other collections by purchasing equipment, like dehumidifiers. The Czech National Library completed a new building in 1995 which has a housing capacity for 4 million volumes. It's aim to accomodate old foreign literature contributed to proper housing of historic collections in the old library building.

For the majority of Russian , CIS and as far as I know for Bulgarian libraries, this strategy is the only affordable strategy in the current financial situation. During my recent visits to Moldova National Library, Kemerovo (Siberia) and Smolensk Regional libraries, my assessment was confirmed on this point: tidiness, cleanliness of these repositories is beyond any criticism .

Boxing is identified as another preventive measure which all libraries are favorable toward. Boxing programmes in general are designed for special collections. Therefore identification and selection of materials for boxing is not so complicated. Curators of collections recom-

mend for boxing artifacts into which libraries made great capital investment. For example Russian Library of the Academy of Science (BAN) a couple of years ago boxed all the documents from the Peter the Great Library.

The LFL boxed all the documents dated 15,16th,17 th century. NL of Latvia keeps most of all its rare books collection in boxes. In Slovenia after a condition suvey of medieval codices an extensive boxing program was designed and is currently under way.

In most cases productivity of boxing is a critical ussue. Only BAN has a highly productive boxing machine donated to it by LC. Other libraries make boxes manually. It is true that making a box takes less time than conservation treatment, but still it hasn't reached the point where this preservation method might be called a mass treatment without any reservations. Another factor hindering the process is the high price of acid free cardboard and dependance on importing materials from Germany, UK, an France. As far as I know, the Czech Republic and Hungary manufacture acid-free cardboard but the marketing of these products is poor, even though their prices are quite competitive. For this reason, we in Russia launched a project supported by OSI on production of domestic acid free cardboard. This is a joint project of BAN, Research Institute of Paper in St. Petersburg and IFLA PAC Regional Center. In a few months RNL, RSL, BAN, LFL, 3 regional conservation centers and the Federal Archive will get their portion of acid free cardboard on conditon these institutions submit lists of selected documents for boxing. This requirement will stimulate taking very weighed decisions.

As for as I know, LFL is going to box its rare collection. The Rostov upon Don Library is selecting its most valuable items from its historical regional collection. Likewise the Vladimir regional library has chosen rare regional periodicals.

As soon as Russia starts to manufacture acid-free cardbord other CIS countries will be able to order it without the difficulties which connected not so much with money as with customs procedures.

Meanwhile some libraries in CIS and Russia are using acid cardboard for boxing. IFLA PAC Regional Center is trying to raise the level of awareness of the threats in using non-archival materials.

Binding, is by large the one area where selection decisions are made not by subject bibliographers but by staff working in the stacks and in readers services departments. It is a long established practice (say, in Bulgaria, Russia, Uzbekistan, Moldova etc) originated from the assumption that if a title is worn and torn, it should be bounded. In fact this is an example of pure title-for-title approach even though libraries bind quite a lot. Practically each library has a binding department. In the majority of cases these workshops serve general collections like a department of the Care of Modern collections (responsible for binding boxing, cleaning) in the NL of Czeck Republic, or Binding department in the NL of Latvia, or yet another example of Kemerovo Reginal Library LFL where identification and selection of materials for binding in fact has nothing to do with involvement of subject bibliographers although under current limitations it is their duty to make a decision on consultation with other staff. We, at the LFL, once made an attempt to bring subject bibliographers to the stack where preidentified materials returned from circulation were collected and waited for the final verdict of subject bibliographers. This attempt resulted in mutual frustration: subject bibliographers refused to spend their precious time and expressed readiness to pass the responsibility to circulation and stacks staff, who in turn were irritated by the speed of work of subject bibliographers. So the experiment ended with mutual dissatisfaction, which doesn't mean though that creation of a mechanism linking bibliographers and technical staff should be postponded. In fact recent

developments made us in the LFL to once again revise old practice.

Microfilming is an area where there is greater spread in which subject bibliographers should play a decisive role during a selection phase. Should does not mean , however, that they do play that. In some countries, the burden of decision is on stacks staff, like in Bulgaria and in some Russian and CIS libraries.

In Eastern Europe in the majority of cases, microfilming programmes focus on newspapers as most endangered and bulky parts of collections. For example, in the Czech Republic a cooperative project named Kramerius has joined efforts with 4 libraries (under the leadership of the NL) for microfilming 18 dailies.

In Latvia the project "Heritage-1" ("Mantojums-1') is aimed at microfilming rare Latvian regional newspapers available only in the National and Academic Libraries. In Russia , rare regional newspapers are being microfilmed (Eparchialnyie and Gubernskiie Vedomosty from Tula, Tver, Vladimir). Also current regional dailies from 7 regions are being microfilmed by Rusian agency "Repronics".

Mass deacidification has not become a mass treatment due to economic constraints. Therefore no examples on selection can be given. But once Eastern Europe recovers from the economic crises this strategy will pose specific selection questions to managers of collections.

Even with this surface examination of the selection practices from several libraries in Eastern Europe and CIS countries, makes me think that the efficency of selection in collection management is a hard issue to tackle. Ensuring long term accessability of relevant collections in future requires creating current reliable mechanisms that will enable an institution to have the best possible collection today and in the future. A whole array of already existing techniques like the conspectus, evaluation of user demands and usage of acquired and required documents, collections duplications studies, collection's preservation identification surveys have to be included into a planning process to identify those parts of collections or even entire collections that may be preserved with the help of mass preservation methods. My own view on the use of these techniques in Eastern Europe is that they should be used more intensively and if when used be applied more consistently in making preservation decisions. Additionally, they should be used in consultation with staff responsible for developing current collections.

Latest Revision: *June 7, 1999*

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